

Stop further conglomeration of the media

I am writing to you today to comment on Docket No. 02-277, The Biennial Review of the FCC's broadcast media ownership rules.

With the CURRENT state of media deregulation and consolidation US citizens have little other than CORPORATE PROPOGANDA available to them through the major media sources. Anything resembling something other than the CORPORATE AGENDA can only be found through very diligent effort over the internet. To allow further conglomeration would be to add outrage to the ridiculous.

Our democracy relies on an informed citizenry. It is based on a rich soup of opinions and of viewpoints and sources of information. Without that we don't have a democracy at all. It has been said that a fascist state needs propaganda for control of the population less than a democracy because the latter would require control of people's minds. Certainly there are corporate interests to do just that! Lack of diversity in media ownership results in lack of diversity in broadcast information which is tantamount to propaganda.

In its goals to promote competition, diversity and localism in today's media market, I strongly believe that the FCC should retain all of the current media ownership rules now in question. These rules serve the public interest by limiting the market power of already huge companies in the broadcast industry.

I do not believe that the studies commissioned by the FCC accurately demonstrate the negative affects media deregulation and consolidation have had on media diversity. While there may be indeed be more sources of media than ever before, the spectrum of views presented have become more limited.

The right to carry on informed debate and discussion of current events is part of the founding philosophy of our nation. Our forefathers believed that democracy was best served by a diverse marketplace of ideas. If the FCC allows our media outlets to merge, our ability to have open, informed discussion with a wide variety of viewpoints will be compromised.

The public interest will best be served by preserving media ownership rules in question in this proceeding.

In addition to the official hearing on this matter in Richmond, VA, I strongly urge the FCC to hold additional hearings elsewhere around the nation to solicit the widest possible participation from the public which will be the most directly affected by the outcomes of these decisions. I think it is important for the FCC to not only consider the points of view of those with a financial interest in this issue, but also those with a social or civic interest.

With the serious impact these rule changes will have on our democracy, it is incumbent on the Commission to take the time to review these issues more thoroughly and allow the American people to have a meaningful say in the process.

Thank you,

Dr. John Hurd

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